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John Landers
Animals in Science Committee

C/O ASC Secretariat
3rd floor Seacole
2 Marsham Street
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23 DEC 2013

Dear John,

Re: Lessons to be learnt, for duty holders and the regulator, from reviews and investigations into non-compliance.

As the Home Office Minister responsible for the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 I was extremely concerned to hear of allegations of non-compliance at Imperial College London (ICL) published by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) in April 2013.

I am pleased to report that the Home Office Inspectorate has now completed its investigation into the alleged non-compliance at ICL. The scope of the final investigation was bounded by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and sets out the investigations and evaluations made by the Inspectorate and the actions that the Secretary of State has taken against individuals.

Separate to the Home Office investigation, ICL commissioned an independent report, chaired by Prof. Steve Brown, to investigate and assess the approach to laboratory animal care and welfare across the College. The report set out to 'provide a report describing areas of animal research that represented best practice at Imperial as well as those areas that fell short of the best standards practised within the UK (and more widely). Moreover, in so doing, the committee would deliver detailed recommendations for improvements, providing where relevant potential solutions. The committee considered its overarching responsibility was to deliver recommendations that would ensure that the College was a leader, both within the UK and internationally, in the development and application of the 3Rs'.

The Animals in Science Committee (ASC) is well placed to review both the Inspectorate's investigation report and the ICL independent report. I therefore request that the ASC provide a 'lessons learned and broader issues from the incident' review.

The ASC review should provide recommendations across the tiers of responsibilities – the regulator, the establishment licence holder and other duty holders. The review

should not be a further review of ICL, its compliance and practices, but should be applicable more broadly.

The outcome of the recommendations we receive from the ASC must ensure that animal research is carried out humanely and only when necessary, and that the provision of a licence at any level entrusts duty holders to uphold their legal obligations and behave in ways which ensure the highest standards of animal care and welfare at all times. In this context I ask the ASC to also reflect on the Operational Guidance to the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 which we will lay before Parliament early in 2014

To ensure openness and transparency of process, I intend to make the ASC's findings public. I enclose, with this letter, both reports together with the Operational Guidance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Norman Baker MP
Minister of State